

circumstances and country, and to look down upon those who ape European dress and manners. Denationalisation is fought against in every possible way.

A year and a half ago work among women was begun by four ladies of the community of the Sisters of Bethany. The position of Syrian women, in spite of its partial elevation by means of the Fiske Seminary, is still very low, and within the Old Church there is an absolute necessity for raising it, and through it the tone of the home life and the training of children. These ladies have thirty boarders in their school between the ages of eight and sixteen, a previous knowledge of reading acquired in the village schools being a condition of admission. The daily lessons consist of Bible teaching, the catechism before referred to, ancient and modern Syriac, geography, arithmetic, and all branches of housework and needle-work. Due regard is paid to Syrian customs, and the picturesque Syrian costume is retained.

Since these ladies have acquired an elementary knowledge of Syriac they have been itinerating in the Urmi villages, holding Bible classes, giving instruction, and distributing medicines among the sick. The ignorance and superstition of the Christian women are almost past belief. One great difficulty which the "sisters" have to encounter arises from the early marriages of the girls, child-brides of eleven and twelve years old being quite common. It may reasonably be expected that the presence and influence, the gentleness and self-sacrifice of these refined

and cultured Christian ladies will tell most favourably upon their pupils, and strengthen with every month of their residence in Urmi. The Moslems understand and respect the position of voluntarily celibate women, and speak of them as " those who have left the world."

The Mission clergy of late have striven to instruct the adult Syrian population of the Urmi Plain by